

104TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 739

To amend title 4, United States Code, to declare English as the official language of the Government of the United States.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

JANUARY 30, 1995

Mr. ROTH (for himself, Mr. PACKARD, Mr. DOOLITTLE, Mr. BARTLETT of Maryland, Mr. PARKER, Mr. BURTON of Indiana, Mr. COBLE, Mr. ARCHER, Mr. CALLAHAN, Mr. BUNNING of Kentucky, Mr. GOODLATTE, Mr. STUMP, Mr. INGLIS of South Carolina, Mr. ROGERS, Mr. SENSENBRENNER, Mr. LIPINSKI, Mr. HANCOCK, Mr. ROYCE, Mr. HUTCHINSON, Mr. NEY, Mr. FORBES, Mr. SOLOMON, Mr. KINGSTON, Mr. ROHRABACHER, Mr. OXLEY, and Mr. KING) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Economic and Educational Opportunities

A BILL

To amend title 4, United States Code, to declare English as the official language of the Government of the United States.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “Declaration of Official
5 Language Act of 1995”.

1 **SEC. 2. ENGLISH AS OFFICIAL LANGUAGE.**

2 (a) IN GENERAL.—Title 4, United States Code, is
3 amended by adding at the end the following new chapter:

4 **“CHAPTER 6—LANGUAGE OF THE GOVERNMENT**

“Sec.

“161. Declaration of official language.

“162. Preferred language of communication

“163. Preserving and enhancing the role of the official language

“164. Duties of citizenship.

“165. Reform of naturalization requirement.

“166. Exceptions.

“167. Preemption.

“168. Construction.

“169. Enforcement.

5 **“§ 161. Declaration of official language**

6 “English is the official language of the Government
7 of the United States.

8 **“§ 162. Preferred language of communication**

9 “English is the preferred language of communication
10 among citizens of the United States.

11 **“§ 163. Preserving and enhancing the role of the offi-**
12 **cial language**

13 “The Government of the United States shall promote
14 and support the use of English for communications among
15 United States citizens. Communications by officers and
16 employees of the Government of the United States with
17 United States citizens shall be in English.

1 **“§ 164. Duties of citizenship**

2 “All United States citizens should be encouraged to
3 read, write, and speak English to the extent of their phys-
4 ical and mental abilities.

5 **“§ 165. Reform of naturalization requirements**

6 “(a) It has been the long-standing national belief that
7 full citizenship in the United States requires fluency in
8 English. English is the language of opportunity for all im-
9 migrants to take their rightful place in American society.

10 “(b) The Immigration and Naturalization Service
11 shall—

12 “(1) enforce the established English language
13 proficiency standard for all applicants for United
14 States citizenship, and

15 “(2) conduct all naturalization ceremonies en-
16 tirely in English.

17 **“§ 166. Exceptions**

18 “This chapter does not apply to the use of a language
19 other than English for—

20 “(1) religious purposes,

21 “(2) training in foreign languages for inter-
22 national communication, or

23 “(3) use of non-English terms of art in govern-
24 ment documents.

1 **“§ 167. Preemption**

2 “This chapter preempts any State or Federal law
3 which is inconsistent with this chapter.

4 **“§ 168. Construction**

5 “This Act is not intended to affect programs in
6 schools designed to encourage students to learn foreign
7 languages.

8 **“§ 169. Enforcement**

9 “(a) CAUSE OF ACTION.—Whoever is injured by a
10 violation of this chapter may, in a civil action, obtain ap-
11 propriate relief.

12 “(b) ATTORNEY’S FEES.—In any action under this
13 chapter, the court may allow a prevailing party, other than
14 the United States, a reasonable attorney’s fee as part of
15 costs.”.

16 (b) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of chapters
17 for title 4, United States Code, is amended by adding at
18 the end the following new item:

“6. Language of the Government 161”.

19 (c) REPEALS.—

20 (1) BILINGUAL EDUCATION.—Title VII of the
21 Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965
22 (other than sections 7201 through 7309) is repealed.

1 (2) BILINGUAL BALLOT.—Section 203 of the
2 Voting Rights Act of 1965 (42 U.S.C. 1973aa–1a)
3 is repealed.

